

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CITY  
OF KINGSPORT ON THE HIGHER  
EDUCATION INITIATIVE

SPEECH OF

**HON. DAVID P. ROE**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 9, 2009*

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the Higher Education Initiative by the City of Kingsport. The Higher Education Initiative worked to revitalize the economy in Kingsport by improving the overall education level of its labor force.

Madam Speaker, I am not the only one praising Kingsport for their initiative. Kingsport has been awarded the 2009 Innovations in American Government Awards by The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University for its higher education initiatives.

To win this prestigious award, Kingsport had to compete against 600 other federal, state and local governments.

The Kingsport Center for Higher Education consists of five institutions: Carson-Newman College, King College, Lincoln Memorial University, Northeast State Community College, and the University of Tennessee. This unique partnership allows the Center to offer courses and programs ranging from associate to doctoral degrees.

Just recently, I moved my district congressional office to this impressive facility. As a member of the Education and Labor Committee, I support this great initiative and I thank Kingsport for their dedication to their local economy and their commitment to education.

Since Kingsport has taken the initiative towards promoting higher education nearly a decade ago, there has been a 23 percent increase in high school graduates, a 27.5 percent increase in those with Associate Degrees and a 19.2 increase in those with Bachelor's Degrees.

Education adds value and improves quality of life. I commend the City of Kingsport for their hard work and dedication that has truly made the city a better place.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS PELAIA

**HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 14, 2009*

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the work of an outstanding individual, Thomas Pelaia, who will be recognized by the John I. Crecco Foundation with its Public Safety Award on September 11, 2009 for his many years of dedicated service to keeping our communities safe.

It is only fitting that he be honored in this, the permanent record of the greatest democracy ever known, because he is the embodiment of the patriotism and community service that make our nation great.

Thomas Pelaia joined the Bloomfield Fire Department on May 13, 1980. After serving as a line fireman, he was transferred to the Fire

Prevention Bureau where he served as an Inspector, Senior Inspector, and now as the Fire Official who is the Chief Inspector of Fire Prevention. During his tenure there, he has worked to make Bloomfield one of the safest communities in the nation. In 1999, he partnered with the Bloomfield Board of Education in having fire sprinklers installed in major school construction projects. To date, three of the eight elementary schools and the high school are fully equipped with sprinkler systems; many of the other schools are partially equipped.

Tom has been the Deputy Essex County Fire Mutual Aid Coordinator since 1994. On January 19, 2000 he organized the mutual aid response to the devastating fire at Seton Hall University. Shortly after the fire, Tom worked closely with Bloomfield College to have sprinklers installed throughout all of the dormitories, even before legislation was passed to mandate them. Due to his efforts in protecting these schools, he was honored as Fire Protection Inspector of the Year in May 2001 by the New Jersey State Fire Prevention and Protection Association and the New Jersey State Department of Community Affairs. Also as Fire Coordinator, he organized Essex County's response to New York City after the tragic events of eight years ago when the September 11, 2001 attacks took place. He organized the response of 25 Essex County fire companies to protect the boroughs of Staten Island and Brooklyn on September 12 and 13, 2001.

Tom was an integral part of the accreditation team that worked to have the Bloomfield Fire Department receive International Accreditation. It is the first in New Jersey and the first career Fire Department in the northeast to receive this prestigious recognition which was awarded in March of this year. Tom has been an active member of many organizations throughout the years. He has served as Bloomfield FMBA Local 19 Treasurer, Vice President, President, and Executive Delegate for over 15 years. He also served the New Jersey State FMBA as a District Vice President and Legislative Committeeman.

Tom currently serves as a Fire Advisor to the Bloomfield Volunteer Emergency Squad. He is the Secretary of the Bloomfield Firemen's Relief Association and is the Essex County Legislative Committeeman for the New Jersey State Fireman's Association. As a 35 year member of the Bell and Siren Club, Inc., he is the Chairman of its Essex Committee and the Vice President of the International Convention which will be hosted in New Jersey in 2011. He is also an active member of the Essex County Fire Prevention Association and the Essex County Fire Chief's Association. Tom is also a member of Bloomfield UNICO. He resides in Livingston, New Jersey, with his wife Maria and his niece Danielle.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to being able to highlight the achievements of great Americans like Thomas Pelaia.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Thomas's family and friends, everyone at the John I. Crecco Foundation, and me in recognizing the outstanding contributions of Thomas Pelaia to his community.

CONGRATULATING DOLPHIN  
HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH  
GROUP OF THE YEAR

**HON. SAM JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 14, 2009*

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise to congratulate the outstanding members and citizen leaders who make up the Dolphin Heights Neighborhood Crime Watch.

It is a great honor to recognize the Dolphin Heights Neighborhood Crime Watch and I wish this group continued success.

The Dolphin Heights Neighborhood Crime Watch took a firm stand in letting the criminals know that the activities that they were involved in were not going to continue in their community. Due to the efforts, participation and teamwork provided by the Dolphin Heights Neighborhood Crime Watch Group, the Dallas Police Department and the City Prosecutor, a 12 percent decrease in crime within the past year was noticed among the following criminal offenses: 5 percent decrease in Business Burglaries, 7 percent decrease in Burglary of Motor Vehicles, 6 percent decrease in Thefts and a 2 percent decrease in Auto Thefts. Officers of the Southeast Patrol Division made a total of forty-seven (47) Arrests and issued seven hundred and eighty-six (786) Citations involving Drugs, Prostitution, Urban Habitation, Alcohol Violations, Code Violations, Auto Thefts, Assaults, Traffic Violations and Outstanding Warrants.

They also have other successful community programs, including City of Hope, Eye on the Community, Treasure of Hope, National Night Out, Community Clean-up, Community Emergency Response Team, and the After School Program.

The Dolphin Heights Neighborhood Crime Watch is a hard working group that believes in teamwork and accomplishing their goals.

I am pleased to congratulate the Dolphin Heights Neighborhood Crime Watch on their outstanding efforts and share their good work with my colleagues in the United States Congress and the American people. They're making Texas a better place to live, work and raise a family.

GRATITUDE FOR THE SERVICE OF  
LILLIAN V. GERMAN

**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 14, 2009*

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank one of the most dedicated and indispensable members of the Judiciary Committee staff, Lillian German. For the past 6 years, Lillian has served as a counsel to the Committee, working principally as the Deputy Chief Oversight Counsel during the 110th and 111th Congresses.

A proud native of Houston, Texas, Lillian graduated from the University of North Texas where she was a leader in student government and a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority. She earned her law degree from Southern Methodist University, and, following